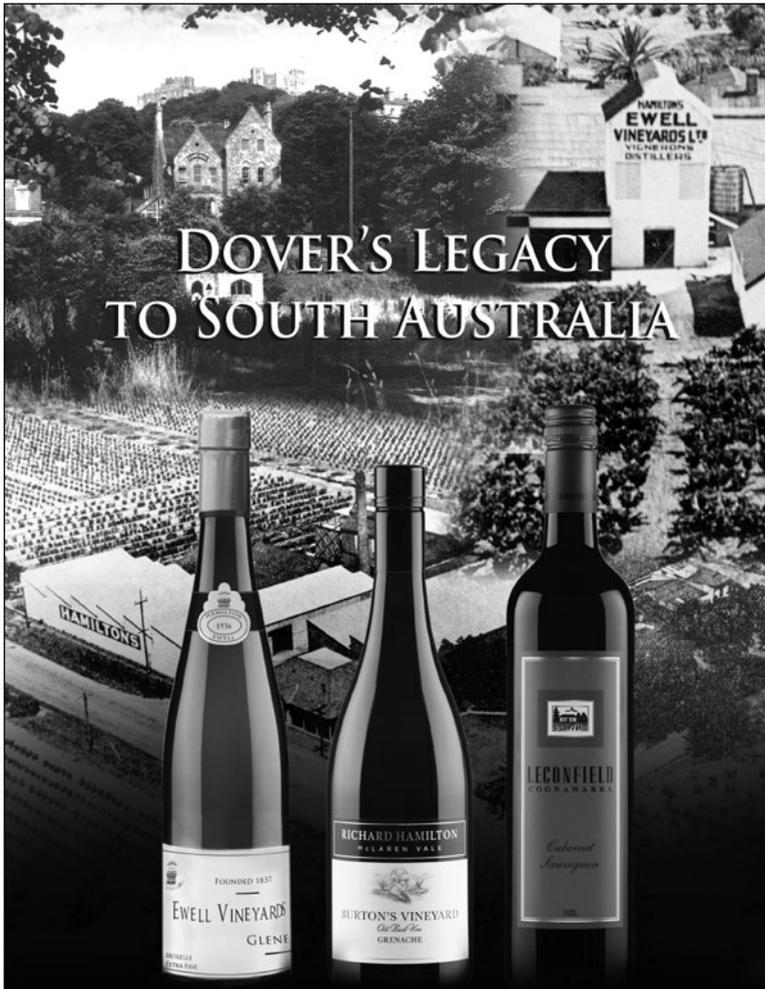


The
Dover
Society

Newsletter

No. 99

November 2020



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THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies
Registered Charity No. 299954

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Joan Liggett, Jonathan Sloggett, Terry Sutton, Mike McFarnell
Christine Waterman, Patricia Hooper-Sherratt

THE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

Derek Leach OBE, 24 Riverdale, River, Dover CT17 0GX
Tel: 01304 823926 Email: derekriverdale@btinternet.com

VICE-CHAIR

Beverley Hall, 61 Castle Avenue, Dover CT16 1EZ
Tel: 01304 202646 Email: bevbov61@hotmail.com

HON. SECRETARY

Jeremy Cope, 53 Park Avenue, Dover CT16 1HD
Tel: 01304 211348 Email: jeremycoppe@willersley.plus.com

HON. TREASURER

Mike Weston, 71 Castle Avenue, Dover CT16 1EZ
Tel: 01304 202059 Email: weston71dover@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Sheila Cope, 53 Park Avenue, Dover CT16 1HD
Tel: 01304 211348 Email: sheilacope@willersley.plus.com

SUMMER SOCIAL SECRETARY

Rodney Stone, [ex officio] Bahia, 10 Lighthouse Road, St Margaret's
Bay, Dover CT15 6EJ
Tel: 01304 852838 Email: randdstone29@gmail.com

WINTER SOCIAL SECRETARY

Beverley Hall, 61 Castle Avenue, Dover CT16 1EZ
Tel: 01304 202646 Email: bevbov61@hotmail.com

EDITOR

Alan Lee, 8 Cherry Tree Avenue, Dover CT16 2NL
Tel: 01304 213668 Email: Alan.lee1947@ntlworld.com

PRESS SECRETARY

Terry Sutton MBE, 17 Bewsbury Cross Lane, Whitfield, Dover CT16
3HB Tel: 01304 820122 Email: terry.sutton@route56.co.uk

PLANNING

Chairman Pat Sherratt, Castle Lea, Taswell Street, Dover CT16 1SG
Tel: 01304 228129 Email: tt.castle-lea@tiscali.co.uk
Deputy Chairman Graham Margery *Committee* Sandra Conlon,
Tony Bones, Charles Lynch, Mike Weston

REFUBISHMENT

Chair Jenny Olpin, 19 Redlands Court, London Road, River,
Dover CT17 0TW. Tel: 01304 825011 Email: jennyolpin@gmail.com
Committee Jeremy Cope, John Cotton, Mike McFarnell, Deborah
Gasking, Jim Pople, Alan Sencicle, Mary Simpson, Mike Weston

ARCHIVIST

Dr S.S.G. Hale, 34 Church Hill, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3DR
Tel: 01304 825670

MINUTE SECRETARY

Yvonne Miller

WEB PAGE

William Parker-Gorman Email: William@thedoversociety.co.uk

ADVERTISING SECRETARY

Jean Marsh, 31 Millais Road, Dover CT16 2LW
Tel: 01304 206123 Email: jean.marsh7@ntlworld.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alan Sencicle, Email: lorraine.sencicle@btinternet.com
Deborah Gasking, Email: deb4tune8@yahoo.co.uk
Graham Margery, Email: grahammargery@btinternet.com

WEB SITE

http://thedoversociety.co.uk

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The Objectives of the Dover Society

founded in 1988.

- to promote high standards of planning and architecture
- to interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archæology, natural history and architecture of the area
- to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest
- and commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The area we cover comprises the parishes or wards of Barton, Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Maxton, Pineham, Priory, River, St. Radigund's, Town & Pier and Tower Hamlets.

All members receive three Newsletters a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events – talks, tours, visits, Members' Meetings and usually a Christmas Feast.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.

Editorial

Bushy Rough/Bushy Ruff

In the July edition 'The Battle of Coxhill Bridge' in the third paragraph, as on the OS Map of 1907, the original spelling Bushy Rough is used. By 1922 the OS spelling was then Bushy Ruff. I hope this clarifies the point.

Union Road/Street

On page 40 the caption should read, Kingsford Windmill Brewery, Union Road, Dover 1865 and not Union Street, this runs from Snargate Street towards the Clock Tower. Thanks to 'Jim' Green for spotting my error.

Old Buckland Mill Site

Buckland Mill closed in 2000 with the first planning application lodged in 2006. In October the doors swung open on the latest addition to the "Mill" site a new Co-op shop, open 7 am to 10 pm daily. A car park is provided on site with a pedestrian entrance at the bottom of Crabble Hill.

Dover - Bus and Cycle Lane

The new 'temporary' bus and cycle lane along Maison Dieu Road was imposed on Dover by Kent Highway Services without consultation. This highly controversial scheme proved to be poorly thought out, dangerous and a complete waste of time and money. With growing criticism from people living or working in the town, and unanimous opposition from Dover Town Council, within two weeks of it opening, on 14th September, Kent County Council was forced to abandon the scheme. A KCC spokesman, blamed post-lockdown traffic levels, Operation Stack and TAP as the reasons why it did not work. He did not however apportion any blame on the poor planning and design of this scheme.

Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens

Upgrading work continues at both locations. The fountain lake paving has been repaired and the old damaged railings removed. Pathways to the café and car park have been resurfaced.

The yew tree ellipse shape and railings to Kearsney Court are completed. Planting of shrubs and perennials has begun and the grand and bench borders have been prepared. Benches are now installed by the lily pond and summer house pathways. Bridge crossing points have been installed to the opened-up culverts within Kearsney Abbey. Next year gardening and planting work at both Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens will include finishing the grand border and orchard.

Alan Lee, Editor

Greetings From The Chairman

Derek Leach

Dear Members,
I hope that you are keeping well, safe and sane in these difficult times! I thought that you would like to hear what has been happening in the Society since March and lockdown.

The work of the Society has continued as far as we were able in the circumstances. Our AGM in April had to be cancelled, although you received the text of my annual report in the March Newsletter and the financial report in the July Newsletter. The Executive, Planning and Refurbishment committees have been meeting online and reports on activities which are in this copy of the Newsletter. Work on the River Dour and Cowgate Cemetery work parties were able to resume.

In addition to the AGM cancellation there were other casualties. With the closure of the Town Hall we could not organise guided tours at all, nor organise Dover's Heritage Open Days in September. The summer outings and the Society holiday in Exmouth were also cancelled, although we hope to resurrect them in 2021. Whilst we planned our normal winter activities, we have had to cancel our October and November open meetings because of the Covid restrictions and their impact on holding meetings in St. Mary's hall. Similarly, with the Town Hall still closed and not taking bookings we have cancelled our usual Christmas Feast. The

Dover Society usually lays a wreath at the Zeebrugge Raid Memorial at the St. James' Cemetery remembrance service on St George's Day, but it was cancelled. At the time of writing it is not known whether Dover's November Remembrance Service will be possible. The usual very well attended service at the former Marine Station, including the Society laying a wreath at its plaque to the Unknown Warrior's return in November 1920 - the centenary this year - will be symbolic, attended by only 6 representatives.

One bright ray of sunshine is that the National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded the Maison Dieu (Town Hall) project the grant of £4,270,500 as requested. This means that with the funding being provided by Dover District Council, Dover Town Council and The Dover Society work on delivering this long-awaited scheme can start. The downside is that the Town Hall will be closed to the public for some two years, probably from September 2021 once contracts for the work are in place.

Whilst at the time of writing it is unclear what sort of Christmas will be possible this year, I sincerely hope that we shall all be able to celebrate with our families and friends.

Very best wishes for Christmas and a much brighter New Year.



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Tel: 01304 213668 Email: Alan.lee1947@ntlworld.com

DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 100 will be Wednesday 27th January 2021. The Editor welcomes contributions and interesting drawings or photographs.

'Paper copy' should be typed at double spacing. Handwritten copy should be clear with wide line spacing. Copy on computer disc or by e-mail is acceptable. Pictures via e-mail to be submitted in JPEG and not imbedded in the text of the article and must be in as high resolution as possible. Please ring 01304 213668 to discuss details.

Publication in the Newsletter does not imply the Society's agreement with any views expressed, nor does the Society accept responsibility for any statements made.

EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION TEAM

Editor:	Mr Alan Lee
Proof Readers:	Mr Terry Sutton, Ann B. Tomalak and John Morgan
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* * * * *

DOVER GREETERS

Dover Greeters are volunteers greeting visitors to Dover. We love doing it and invite you to come and try it once!

Tel: 01304 206458

Refurbishment Committee Jenny Olpin

Not to be daunted by the edict to restrict face to face meetings, the Refurbishment Committee has continued to flourish on-line via the auspices of Zoom. This strange on - screen world sadly resulted in omitting some of our members who chose to abstain due to not being 'au fait' with the virtual world. We hope they will be able to return to us soon. It has taken a lot of investment and determination to educate ourselves with the technology and I am sure that many of us have (and indeed still are) learning how to communicate and improve our digital literacy. There are good on-line digital skills learning platforms available if you would like to know more, so just google digital skills where there is a plethora of choice available to you.

As our monthly refurbishment meetings have progressed our lack of engagement in the activities of day to day life in Dover required us to re-consider our agenda. Our priorities have changed, and our focus was, and is, very much on the well-being of the town and where there might be gaps in the support and help being given to our various communities. We have linked with Ashley Payne, Community Development Officer with Dover District Council, who was co-ordinating information about shopping, prescription collection, foodbank operation, GP surgeries etc. It became apparent that across the various Dover communities volunteers have been recruited from diverse backgrounds to become active with many aspects of support, even providing a friendly face to those suddenly isolated by age or health.

There was, we noted, in the early months a definite change in the air quality. The lack of traffic resulted in a silence that

seemed to draw our attention to the vibrant bird song, which, of course, is always there but we can't hear it!

We monitored the tourist venues, such as Langdon Cliffs and the Castle, and were relieved how Dover began to awake with the 'staycation' visitors which was further stimulated by the 'eat out to help out' initiative. Of course, this was not perfect, but the town was beginning to operate in the term we've all come to know as the 'new normal'. Hairdressers, hotels and public houses began to open however, we are still concerned, but hopeful, that they can all survive the coming winter months.

Our regular agenda includes discussions about our rough sleepers, many of whom are known to our Cowgate Cemetery volunteers. A positive factor of the 'lockdown' was the support they were given by Porchlight and Canterbury City Council in finding accommodation that afforded them protection. At our last meeting we were pleased to hear that there have been no 'rough sleepers' returning to the cemetery despite the fabulous summer weather we have been fortunate to experience this year.

Toilet facilities in the town continue to be a priority for many forums. Despite the letters, campaigns and high-level profiling of this issue nothing appears to have changed. Refurbishment will re-visit the provision and opening times of our town's conveniences during the next months and publish our results on our website so as we all know what is currently operational.

Another benefit to the town of the decrease in pedestrians has been less litter being deposited. This has been particularly

noticeable in the vicinity of the Schools..... just saying!

Another focus for refurbishment is the suggestion of a tree planting scheme for Dover which enhances the corners, rough land and general appearance of several of our streets. We will keep you informed as to how we progress with this.

If you are interested in joining our Refurbishment Committee which will be 'virtual' for the foreseeable future, then please email me. We have good discussions and it's good to be able to have a chance to make a difference. My contact details are inside of the front cover of this newsletter and on the Society website at thedoversociety.co.uk

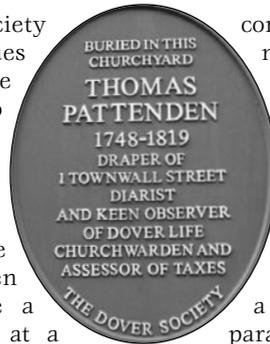
Thomas Pattenden

Derek Leach

Why did The Dover Society erect one of its blue plaques to Thomas Pattenden? For more than 20 years from 1797 to 1819 Thomas, a draper and stocking seller of 1 Townwall Street recorded, in small notebooks, daily 'remarks and occurrences' he deemed to be of interest. Being such a keen observer, his notes provide a fascinating record of Dover at a critical time in history.

Thomas was born in Dover on 21 May 1748. Hard working, with a head for commerce, his business thrived. In addition, part of his house was let and his wife took in children needing to take the sea air for their health. Investing wisely, Thomas became one of the wealthiest citizens, an assessor of taxes, churchwarden and patron of charities. In his spare time he followed world affairs, read widely, sketched and painted. Housebound toward the end of his life, he wrote a history from Noah's flood to the Middle Ages.

In his diaries he noted the passing of ships and fleets in the Channel with almost poetic descriptions. Thomas often



commented on the state of the national finances during this Napoleonic Wars period, and closer to home, noted the sharp increase in the cost of candles as war threatened. In 1803, he noted that Dover had raised eight companies of volunteers, providing their own arms, on duty for three weeks at a time but being paid. They paraded on the Rope Walk and marched with William Pitt, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, at their head to Maison Dieu Fields. In 1805 Thomas could see from the cliff tops the enemy camped on each side of Boulogne. He was asked by the Customs Collector to make a drawing of the Boulogne area and to copy a map of the coast and batteries of the town plus the harbour entrance.

The Dover defences were substantially strengthened and recorded in detail by Thomas in 1795-97, including the underground barracks at the castle and, later, the construction of the incredible Grand Shaft staircases. Local troop movements did not escape his eye and he saw something of the battles at sea. Following the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar, the Victory, with Nelson's body on board,

anchored off Dover. National victories were celebrated in the town with parades, balls and grand suppers. The town was illuminated and candles placed in windows. Thomas noted that two captured French generals attended one of these balls! Captured French sailors were usually kept in the town goal; occasionally old and infirm prisoners were sent back to France and released.

Despite the wars, Thomas carried on his business, ordering goods and sometimes travelling to Canterbury, usually by chaise, but sometimes walking part way to Bridge or the Halfway House. On one occasion he describes walking all the way, commenting finally, 'got home at six and thank God met Mrs. P again in health and safety'. He describes his visits to London by coach via Rochester or by water from Whitstable, combining business with sightseeing.

Thomas expresses concern for individuals fallen on hard times: debtors held in Dover Castle and a man held in the Market Place stocks being pelted by the crowd. In 1807 he witnessed a riot when a crowd demanded the release of four smugglers; magistrates read the Riot Act and mounted soldiers quickly cleared the Market Place. A crime took place in his own home when Thomas had to sack a servant for stealing a pair of stockings.

Many odd incidents are recorded, including Dovorians towing a whale, stranded on the Goodwins, back to Dover, where it was put on display for 6d; later, it was boiled for oil and its gigantic skull displayed at the top of a cliff. A pig was buried in a cave following a cliff fall, but was dug out alive after six months, still able to walk. Whilst there is no record of Thomas playing any sports, he attended horse racing at Priory Fields, Barham

Downs and Buckland Valley and watched cricket matches in Northfall Meadow.

Thomas retired from his drapery business in 1804 and in 1806 his wife died. He recorded her last hours, 'She called me to her bedside and said, "Give me your hand. I am dying. Send for the doctor"... at 12 she was failing fast...at five I could scarce feel a pulse remaining. At six I felt the parting pang and saw her breathe for the last time, when she expired without a struggle and fell asleep'. Mrs. Pattenden was buried alongside Thomas's parents in St. Mary's Churchyard. He lived another 13 years, still taking a keen interest in life, writing, sketching and recording events in his notebooks, most of which survive.

Source: The Pattenden Diaries 1797-1819 by A.L.Macfie, Archaeologia Cantiana, Vol. XCIV, 1978.

Dover Society Badges



Available at £2 each

Contact the editor at:

8 Cherry Tree Avenue

Dover, CT16 2NL

Tel: 01304 213668

Email: Alan.Lee1947@ntlworld.com

WEARING A BADGE ASSISTS IN OUR DRIVE FOR
INCREASED MEMBERSHIP

Dover's Town Clerks in the Aftermath of the Knockers (part 2)

James A. Johnson (1908 – 1997): Town Clerk (1945 -1968)

— Martyn Webster —

After Samuel Loxton (1935-1944), next in the very distinguished long line of persons and families to hold the role of Town Clerk of Dover over the centuries there came an unexpected all-dominating personality who, it could well be said, stood out way above all others before him in an almost indescribable range of ways. Was Dover really ready for him at the time and realize what it was letting itself in for? Did Dover benefit by and from him in the long run? Was he a good choice? These are the questions we may well ask in hindsight, given his record. It is difficult to fairly balance the qualities of the man in a biographical account, such was the impact, not always benign, that this one controversial figure had on Dover's history in the twenty three years of his reign, autonomously and unchallenged, throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

He arrived on the scene in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War which had ravaged and weakened Dover so desperately, to the point that the very heart and soul of it had been knocked for six, both physically and in almost every other way. The damage was, in many cases, unrecoverable. Many of Dover's ancient buildings were lost during this era. The new Town Clerk often made himself unpopular, but he did not seem to care. Some found him dictatorial; he was loved by some and unloved, even feared, by many more yet,



James A. Johnson (1908-1997)

one way or the other, made a real name for himself locally, to his own eventual downfall. Although undoubtedly able and capable to a high degree, one of the unkinder epithets applied to him was that he was a Yorkshire tyke. It was as though he ran Dover single-handedly. This extraordinary man was James Alexander Johnson, who came to be known as "James A" or just "Jimmy".

James Alexander Johnson was born on 13th May 1908 at 67 Tivoli Place, Horton, Bradford, West Yorkshire, younger son and third child of George Ernest Johnson, police sergeant, later inspector, West Yorkshire Police, and his wife Emma, formerly Baker.

The family was unusual. His older brother, George Victor Johnson (1903-1974), was a clergyman who settled before the war in Albany, Western Australia, where he lived out his life. His sister Florrie(1906-2001), known pretentiously in social circles as Cecile, was bachelor James A's constant female companion, housekeeper and "reine chatelaine en charge" of their home at 28 Waterloo Mansions on Dover seafront.

On his first appointment in 1944, the *Dover Express* of 15th September in that year reported thus:

"...Mr Johnson who was educated at Grange High School, Bradford and Leeds University, and who was articted to the Town Clerk of Bradford and partly with a private firm in

London. He was admitted a solicitor in 1932, gaining First Class Honours and being third in order of merit in England and Wales. He was a Clifford's Inn prizeman and a Bradford and Wakefield prizeman. His first Local Government appointment followed, being Junior Assistant Solicitor at Bradford for a year. From 1933-1934 he was Assistant and Prosecuting Solicitor at South Shields, and for a year afterwards Deputy Town Clerk. For two years he was Deputy Town Clerk at Poole (Dorset) but returned to South Shields in 1937 where the salary was substantially increased. While at Poole, Mr Johnson has had considerable experience in many phases of Local Government work which are applicable to Dover."

In his twenty three years of office as Town Clerk and Borough Coroner at Dover, James A, courted controversy at almost every turn and proved to be of a litigious nature at any opportunity. Those who appeared before his coroner courts, and indeed reported upon them, were never in doubt what kind of experience they would be letting themselves in for and at what cost. It was as though he delighted in what seemed to be his overbearing, bullying stance. His fingers appeared to be almost in every pie and he a shadow looming behind all local government doings, in particular the immediate redevelopment of war-torn Dover. It has been said that his role in this determined largely what the town is today or, more to the point, what it is not. Others, rather than I, must be the best judges of this.

Was it therefore with tongue in cheek that the following account was written in the *Dover Express* on his retirement in 1969: "The Town Council was unanimous at its December 1968 meeting in deciding to admit the Town Clerk Mr James A Johnson, who is due to retire shortly, as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough. The town's appreciation of his services will be inscribed

on vellum and presented in a suitable casket during a ceremony later this year at which Mr Johnson will be admitted a Freeman. Alderman George Aslett said it gave him great pleasure to propose that Mr Johnson be admitted a Freeman and that the Corporation should put on record its appreciation of his eminent services as Town Clerk and in many other capacities. The proposal was seconded by the Mayor Councillor Harold Carr and supported by Alderman John Bushell, who referred to the efforts which he had made after the last war to put Dover back on its feet and of the part played by the Town Clerk in ensuring that Dover became the beautiful community it was today."

And so it was that in March 1969 the Freedom of the Borough of Dover was bestowed upon James A, before he and his sister Florrie (Cecile) retired in blurred glory to the bosky chimes of Bournemouth, where they were to see out the rest of their lives.

But Dover had not seen the last of him, for between 1969 and 1979 he carried on in his role as Registrar and Coroner of the Cinque Ports Federation, with a plaque announcing the fact at the door of New Bridge House, his former office of so many years, remaining there intact for another ten years as if to impose his continued presence on all in the town. He was, after all, one of the last Barons of the Cinque Ports, having first been appointed by the then Lord Warden Sir Winston Churchill, over whose installation in 1949 he had himself presided.

In this role he also presided over the installation in 1966 of Sir Winston's successor, former Australian Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies, an appointment that might seem somewhat coincidental to the fact that James A had connexions to Australia, with his own clergyman brother resident there with their father who died there in 1952. A photo in the *Dover Express*

of 1st July 1966 shows a Menzies/Johnson quartet together outside 28 Waterloo Mansions, posing almost literally, the obvious question who was holding court to whom? James A and sister Cecile became firm friends with the Menzies calling upon them, and the reverse, when on their visits Down Under, in particular during a cruise on board the liner *Canberra* at Melbourne later in 1979, for which there is remarkable letter evidence in the archive.

He also had the ear of the Queen Mother herself, whose installation as Lord Warden in 1979 was very nearly scuppered by his own supreme vanity over a spat with Dover Corporation and certain councillors within it, over his name plate having been purposely removed from outside his former Town Clerk's offices at New Bridge House during the installation preliminaries. It seemed that there were those who had had quite enough of his local involvement, even after ten years' absence. The whole situation bore the petty, farcical hallmarks of a Gilbert & Sullivan opera. This was made all the more spiteful by the fact that, at that crucial time, he, James A, reclaimed the Cinque Ports' Silver Oar, a ceremonial piece of the Federation's regalia, which he had had made at his own expense in 1969 after the theft of the original from the Maison Dieu and, cunningly, only loaned to the Federation for its official usage.

The archives of Winchelsea Corporation, held at the Keep, the East Sussex Record Office in Brighton, hold unique, priceless minutes and verbatim notes, not available anywhere else, taken at the time of his resignation as Registrar of the Cinque Ports. They reveal a wave of compliments and recognitions of his service, yet tainted at the very same sessions by his vituperative response, and his perception of acts of vengeance made in Dover to his presence there for the Queen Mother's installation as

Lord Warden. No author in his wildest imagination could have invented such an imbroglio. In the event, luckily, all was supremely retrieved by the adroit work of Ian George Gill, James A's successor as Dover Town Clerk and Cinque Ports Registrar.

On his retirement in 1968 as Dover's last but one Town Clerk under the old order the *Dover Express* wrote very perceptively of him:

"Tall and stocky, he dressed inconspicuously, nearly always in a black or blue suit. Work was his hobby, along with travel. He often worked a 12-14 hour day, before taking a packed briefcase home for more study at his nearby flat."

"His final months in office (were) marred by a planning row at River which became known locally as the Cowper Road Gate Case."

This notorious case taken up by a local resident over an issue of right of way led to a County Court judgment which found that James A, who had by then retired any way, had been guilty of a serious abuse of the power which he had by virtue of his office. Such was the inglorious end to James A's rule over Dover.

As well as his Cinque Ports Baronial status until 1979, James A maintained links with Dover through his business interests in the White Cliffs Hotel. His name also lives on through the Dubris Trust, a scholarship he set up under his will to financially help boys and girls in Dover town schools leaving for university.

Terry Sutton, journalist with the *Dover Express* for 45 years before retiring as deputy editor and well known to us all, said recently, "The majority of those who disliked his attitude kept quiet about it. (He

told me once he had a writ in his pocket to serve on me. It was a joke). Few people in Dover, especially councillors, had the guts to stand up against Jimmy. But when they did, he respected them. One of the bequests he left to Dover was the centre in Maison Dieu Gardens, now Age Concern, a venture led by Jimmy and one-time mayor John Husk."

Terry also reported in 1969, "Those who knew Mr Johnson well remembered him as a very strong character. But he was also a man who, quietly, could be very kind and helpful."

James Alexander Johnson died on 23rd October 1997 aged 89 years at a nursing home in Canford Cliffs, Poole, Dorset. His will included, to his great credit, a number of very generous, kind bequests to a wide range of friends, but principally to his surviving sister, Florrie, otherwise Cecile, who survived him by four years. That same will

stated in clause 2: "I wish my body to be cremated privately with no flowers or mourning and no preceding service at any church nor any memorial service and my ashes to be scattered in Upper Wharfedale, Yorkshire."

What became of the second of the three Cinque Ports' Silver Oars is anyone's guess.

As to James A's successor as the last of Dover's Town Clerks, Ian George Gill,(1968-1974) my biographical account for him has already appeared in his obituary, published in *The Dover Society Newsletter* no.93 (November 2018), following his death in late 2017.

Thus, then, concludes my series on Dover's incredible Town Clerks 1860 - 1974. They are all truly unique both to our ancient town, port and Cinque Port of Dover and our country as a whole.

River Dour Partnership

Deborah Gasking

The Dour was lucky this year in terms of benefitting from a wet winter, although water consumption went up in Dover, which is not ideal. The extremely wet month before summer prevented the lower stretches drying up or being reduced to a small stream. The river is flowing remarkably well for this time of year so, hopefully, this winter we will get the right kind of rain again (preferably at night)!

Kingfishers have successfully bred on the Dour and will be establishing their territories soon, so look out for a flash of blue along the whole length. Of course the tree colours are changing and the Dour will see more egrets and herons looking for an easy feed too. October is the last month

we are allowed to go in the Dour (unless with a permit) as the trout will start spawning November/December time.

Weekly tasks this year, have been done by smaller-sized groups of 3-5 volunteers to respect the Covid 19 guidelines. We have removed 64 bags of rubbish since August. Some of this rubbish has been in the river for well over a decade, which shows that, although we don't do a huge stretch at one time, we are getting just as much, if not more done. So a really massive achievement for those who care for our beloved river.

Well done to us volunteers!

Return of the Unknown Warrior Centenary

Derek Leach

Every year in November, as Chairman of The Dover Society, I lay a wreath by a brass plaque in the former Marine Station, now Cruise Terminal 1. The plaque was the initiative of The Dover Society and was unveiled on 17 May 1997 by the then Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Charles Guthrie.

It marks the return home on 10 November 1920 of the remains of an unknown British soldier killed during the First World War. This November will be the centenary of that event and it was hoped to commemorate it in a special way, but that will not now be possible due to Covid-19.

The origins can be traced back to a Mobile Ambulance Unit formed in 1914 manned by civilian volunteers and led by Fabian Ware. Very soon, in addition to recovering the wounded from the front, they began recording the locations where those killed had been buried in haste. With rapidly increasing numbers, this soon became a full-time job and Fabian Ware was given the task of coordinating the work for the whole Western Front. He was given the honorary army rank of Major.

What was to happen to these bodies and remains? There was a demand from the rich for the bodies of loved ones to be returned to Britain, but Ware was adamant that everybody should receive equal treatment. If the poor could not afford the cost of repatriation, then all the bodies should remain near where they fell, in specially created cemeteries. Unidentified remains would be buried with the inscription 'An Unknown Soldier'. The missing with no known grave would be remembered on memorials in the

cemeteries and through special memorials like the Menin Gate, which bear 55,000 names of those missing around Ypres.

Whilst relatives, whose loved ones had been identified could, if they could afford it, visit the cemeteries abroad and grieve by a known grave, how were the relatives of those thousands with no known grave to have some sort of closure? The answer was to break that hard-and-fast rule of no-repatriation to bring back one unknown set of remains.

So it was that on 7 November 1920 the remains of one unknown Tommy from four different battlefields, Aisne, Arras, Somme and Ypres, were exhumed and taken to a temporary chapel, where they were wrapped in Union flags. There, a blindfolded senior British officer touched one of the bodies. That body, inside a plain coffin, was taken to Boulogne with sacks of soil dug from the spot where the soldier had died, so that the French earth that he had defended would cover the Warrior in Westminster Abbey.



*Inside Rail Van used for the Unknown Warrior,
Capt Charles Fryatt and Nurse Edith Cavell*

On 10 November 1920, the body was placed in an oak coffin, loaded on *HMS Verdun* and brought to Dover, escorted by 6 destroyers. People lined the cliffs and other vantage points. National and local civic leaders waited at Admiralty Pier. As the coffin was unloaded a 19-gun salute reverberated from Dover Castle.



Unknown Warrior Grave in Nave of Westminster Abbey

London to Westminster Abbey, where a guard of honour of 100 VC holders was waiting.

A war that had started with *The Times* newspaper printing casualty lists only of officers ended with a nameless, rankless, classless soldier laid to rest among royalty, the great and the good, to represent the hundreds of thousands

The body and the sacks of soil were loaded into a luggage van, which had previously been used to carry the body of Nurse Edith Cavell. It then went by rail to London, with people lining the track all the way. On the following day, Armistice Day, the body went in procession through the streets of

of British troops with no known grave or buried with identity unknown. 200,000 people filed past the grave in Westminster Abbey on that day and half a million within the month. That Unknown Soldier could have been their loved one!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS **Sheila Cope**

Those who attended Dover Girls' Grammar School during the decades from the early 50s to the 70s will remember the two language teachers Beryl (French) and May (German) both surnamed Jones. They were founder members of the Dover Society. Beryl died some time ago but May, who has died recently, continued to proof-read for the Newsletter until two years ago although she had moved to Folkestone in the meantime.

In July, due to publicity on Facebook activated by our Webmaster William, we received an unusual number of membership applications. Other members have also been busily recruiting and we are grateful to them. We therefore number 464, higher than this time last year in spite of the inevitable cancellation of functions. Thanks to our Editor Alan and to our contributors

for keeping the Newsletter going.

One of our recent new members is Josephine Evans who has replaced her husband Roy following his death in August. The couple were true Dovorians with Roy a regular attender at our meetings. We watched Roy's funeral streamed from North Hertfordshire where they had moved to be near their sons. Funeral streaming seems to be one of the good innovations resulting from Lockdown, enabling those who could not attend to watch the service.

Other welcome new members are: Mrs S Morris, Mr N Mayell, E & J Shirley, Mr C & Mrs W Lynch, Miss E Mailliot, S Durbidge, A Newell, P & J Lyons, D Burrige, J Tomlin, Mr J Kennett, Mr K Sansum, Mr J Ward, Mr R Williams, Mrs V Deans and Mr J Harvey.

Queen Caroline

Terry Sutton

Two hundred years ago in June a lady arrived by ship at Dover who was to cause such a scandal that it nearly brought down the government. At Dover she received such a warm welcome that the town eventually named a street after her. But her husband was not at all pleased to know she was in England.



Queen Caroline c1820 by James Lonsdale

She was Queen Caroline (1768-1821) and her husband the unpopular George IV, who was already illegally married to Maria Fitzherbert. George, a regular womaniser, only married Caroline because he was in debt and short of money!

He later regretted marrying what he described as his “fat and ugly” new wife. He called for a glass of brandy when he first saw her! German-born Caroline arrived at Dover determined to attend the coronation of her husband, who happened to be her first cousin. George on the other hand was determined not to have her at the coronation ceremony.

She was even offered £50,000 by the government not to return to England, but she rejected the offer. One can imagine the scandal. The modern day Charles-Diana issue had nothing on this!!

George was so unpopular in Dover and that's why the ordinary “man-in-the-street” was so keen to show support for Caroline who had been living abroad for six years.

After acknowledging her Dover welcome, on 5th June in 1820 Caroline travelled to London with the aim of being crowned queen.

To prevent this George tried to persuade the government to introduce a Bill alleging Caroline had numerous lovers abroad and even having given birth to an illegitimate child. There's no doubt she acted strangely abroad. It

is alleged she danced naked above the waist in Geneva and had an affair with one of Napoleon's brothers-in-law. But Prime Minister Lord Liverpool, realising there was little chance of getting the Bill passed, dropped the idea. He feared his government would be overturned.

Caroline, against advice from many quarters, turned up at George's coronation at Westminster Abbey in April 1821 but she was locked out on his orders. She banged on the abbey doors shouting “I am the Queen of England. Let me in.”, but Pages were ordered to lock her out. So upset by this turn of events Caroline took to her bed and within 19 days had died.

But Dover still remembered Caroline and Dover Town Council decided to name a road, Caroline Place, in the Stembrook area, now the site of a Dover District Council car park at the back of St Mary's Church. Caroline Place was wrecked in the 1939-45 war and I remember the wreckage being demolished.

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Dover's Little Known Export

Part II

— Peter W Sherred —

We pick up the story with Frank having died in 1913, age 54, of pneumonia leaving his heirs, sons Eric 17 and Sydney 14. In WWI Eric had enlisted in the army and saw action in Gallipoli and on the Western Front and was severely gassed on at least two occasions necessitating his repatriation to England for treatment.

In South Australia meanwhile the Public Trustee took control of the Hamilton winery and vineyards over a period of six precarious years. Soon after Frank died in 1913, Sydney aged 15 years, ran off to sea sailing on a windjammer between Port Adelaide and Plymouth. During his time as a seaman he rounded Cape Horn several times thereby joining an elite group of men known as 'Cape Horners'.

In 1919 Eric returned from the war and with Sydney already back from the sea, a partnership between the two brothers began which proved to be extremely beneficial and productive for the health and growth of the business. Eric, the older brother as Managing Director, proved to be a formidable marketing operator and spent up to six months a year travelling in England, and also made some fifteen visits to Canada, promoting Hamilton's wines. The outcome was not only beneficial to the Hamilton family but for all Australian wine producers. In London Eric saw the unrealistically high prices of French wines and realised a market existed for Australian wines at a better price but, importantly, which would still give a healthy return.

Sydney meanwhile took over as winemaker aided by a cultured modest

Russian emigrant, called John Seeck, who was a talented and highly skilled experienced winemaker from Europe. He joined Hamiltons in 1929 and stayed until his retirement in 1944. He had an interesting past having studied winemaking at Heidelberg University in Germany and for several years later in France and Spain. After further travel, including a visit to Australia, he returned to pre-revolutionary Russia but the Czarist secret police made him flee to St Petersburg from where he was able to leave Russia smuggled aboard a British ship. Back in Australia after tasting samples of Sydney Hamilton's wines, John Seeck politely suggested "they are in need of some improvement"! And over the years improvement was pushed to the limits.

Sydney, who was married to Mavis, spent some forty years in the family vineyard and winery improving the business before establishing in 1974, in his retirement, Leconfield Winery at Coonawarra in the south east of South Australia some 250 miles from Adelaide. In 1977 the first crop of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes was



Leconfield and Richard Hamilton Vineyard & Shed

harvested at this new site and in 1980 the vintage produced was pronounced to be "terrific".

During the inter-war years Sydney's innovative style pioneered the use of mechanical refrigeration in winemaking in Australia which was hugely important as it allowed control of the rate of fermentation of the wine in the otherwise hot climate. 1935 saw the installation of the first such cooling unit but by 1944 a much larger underground cold fermentation cellar with refrigeration plant was excavated which enabled the winery to handle greater quantities of all types of white wine grapes regardless of the climatic conditions at the time. The business flourished under the name of 'Hamilton's Ewell Vineyards Proprietary Limited'.

A light white wine with a slight spritzig called "Ewell Moselle" was developed in 1929 and became a top seller throughout Australia. Experimentation and inventiveness resulted in closed wooden vats fermentation being developed which excluded oxygen in a key part of the process resulting in the high-quality delicate "Ewell Moselle" that was produced. Previously wine fermentation took place in open cement tanks which created oxidation and hygiene problems. Sydney's experiments with refrigeration led to further pioneering initiatives including huge cellars being excavated at Marion. The net result of Eric and Sydney's partnership period was a seismic shift in wine making, much influenced by temperature control turning the "Ewell Moselle" into a "great wine" and enabling Hamiltons to produce quality dry red wines which they called Burgundy and Claret.

Together Eric, the marketer who was married to Doreen, and Sydney the

innovative engineer, rebuilt and expanded the winery; they installed a distillery and restructured the company in 1935 as 'Hamilton's Ewell Vineyards Proprietary Limited'. This period in the family business produced a veritable wine revolution and by 1955 the "Ewell Moselle" was declared the best white wine in Australia and then came Hamilton's Springton "claret" as Sydney was constantly refining his winemaking processes. Sadly, this halcyon period came to an end when the two brothers fell out and Sydney resigned in 1955 moving to Happy Valley some 15 miles south of Adelaide. There in retirement he planted vines and was to work as a vigneron for another 20 years dreaming of and yearning constantly to make the classic Australian dry red "claret" style of wine.

In the 1970's Hamilton's Ewell Vineyards declined and in 1979 they were bought out and the winery closed. In point of fact much of the original vineyard site fell victim to the spread of Adelaide suburbs being sold for housing, education, a drive-in-theatre, and bus depot among other uses, so winemaking and grape growing in the Marion district which is just 6 miles from Adelaide came under siege.

Meanwhile Frank's fourth son, Burton Wyndham Hamilton (1904 - 1994), who was only eight years old when his father Frank died in 1913, had been carving out a successful life for himself as a viticulturist/winemaker but only after experiencing other aspects of Australian life. At school he excelled in Classics and Athletics but in 1921, at the age of 17, encouraged by his maternal uncle James Burton Ayliffe, he took himself off to the Outback and spent a couple of years of hard physical work on a vast sheep farm called Lairg on the Great Australian Bight. Aged 23 he headed far north to a remote

cattle station in the outback of South Australia. To reach it he had to travel by the historic "Ghan" train to the end of the line at Oodnadatta and then travel the final hundred miles by camel! After these formative years he moved east, this time to the Elm Park sheep property near Albury in New South Wales. Soon after he borrowed a large sum of money, secured against his shares in the Hamilton Ewell Vineyards, to buy in 1927 a large farm nearby called "Stony Ridges" with the intention of becoming a sheep farmer. In the event it turned out to be a calamitous venture because of a great drought and the onset of the Great Depression where prices per pound for wool collapsed almost overnight by 90% from 9/- to 9d (people senior in years will know this as nine shillings to nine, pre-decimal, pence). He found himself in a dire situation and the farm was repossessed within two years and his dream of independence had ended. The farm was purchased by none other than his uncle James Burton Ayliffe. Eventually Burton Wyndham Hamilton returned to Adelaide in 1935 with his young wife Gida Mott from Albury, whom he had married in 1932.

Burton initially became the maltster in the thriving family winery and distillery under Eric and Sydney. In 1947 in a major step, Burton purchased the historic Hut Block vineyard (est. 1892) in McLaren Vale, some 25 miles south of Adelaide, now a cornerstone of Richard Hamilton Wines, and later he bought more vineyard land in McLaren Vale and nearby Willunga. Among his purchases was the acquisition of two acres of Grenache vines which, in due time, would produce a great quality wine called Burton's Vineyard Grenache. He had a strong preference for hand tended vines from planting to pruning and harvesting and as a result of his endeavours he further diversified into

Shiraz, Chardonnay and Grenache vines. Burton had also worked for a 10 year period in the Hamilton's laboratory under Sydney from 1948, then later as a travelling salesman for the business in the late 1950s but much of his time was still devoted to experimenting in laboratory work as he sought to perfect his wines.

He gave encouragement to his second youngest son, Richard, who had expressed an interest in keeping the Hamilton name going in the wine game and who had himself bought a modest vineyard and started a winery in McLaren Vale. The wheel came full circle when Burton sold his vineyard and his grapes and gave his tuition and wisdom to young Richard Hamilton (the name where it all started!) who then produced his first vintage in 1972. It is a family belief that without Burton the Hamilton wine line would have ended but because Burton was so innovative and encouraging today's strong position of Richard Hamilton Wines is due almost entirely to his efforts. He enabled Richard to buy an 80 acre block of land at auction by physically raising Richard's arm for the winning bid! In a tribute to his wife he named a Rosé after her - Gida's Rosé. Richard has made it clear he could not have made the business so successful without his father's help.

The current Richard Hamilton is both a prominent Adelaide doctor, specifically a plastic and reconstructive surgeon, and a winemaker who, after the Eric and Sydney period ended and Hamilton's was bought out and closed in 1979, is responsible for resurrecting the Hamilton name and continuing the Hamilton wine line. Supported by his uncle Sydney Hamilton as well as by a Frenchman, Maurice Ou (who had been offered a job originally by Sydney in 1946), Richard built up the family's McLaren Vale vineyard holdings

initially under the watchful eye of his father, Burton, and Richard Hamilton Wines was opened in 1972.

Maurice Ou was the third European winemaker to offer expertise to the Hamilton family and came to Hamilton's just after the war in 1946; initially for two years but that service extended itself over thirty-two years of passionate winemaking. Maurice had studied Oenology at the University of Montpellier and then learned the skills of the winemaking trade in great French vineyards in places like Bordeaux, Beaune and Montpellier, so he was professionally well qualified to be Chief Hamilton winemaker after Sydney retired and he brought with him his Gallic personality and sense of humour as well!

Such was Uncle Sydney's passion for wine making, at the age of 76 he came out of retirement to plant a vineyard in 1974 with the aim of producing a "damn good" red wine – perhaps the best red wine in Australia based on the Cabernet Sauvignon grape. As mentioned earlier in this article he chose a site in the remote Coonawarra winemaking district some 250 miles south of Adelaide and called the vineyard Leconfield after an English ancestor, Lord Leconfield. Through the 1970's and early 1980's numerous award-winning Cabernet Sauvignon wines were made by Sydney, allowing him to achieve his lifelong dream. The most notable was the 1980 Leconfield Cabernet. In 1981 Sydney sold Leconfield to his nephew, the young Richard Hamilton, so the strands of Hamilton wines (Burton's and Sydney's enterprises) came together under one ownership once again.

Richard Hamilton the tailor of Dover in Kent started it all back in the early-mid C19 and Dr Richard Hamilton his 5th

generation direct descendant (great, great, great grandson) is at the helm today together with his son Richard Thomas Hamilton (aka Tom). Quite a story and it all started in an emigration from Dover to the colony of South Australia!

Perhaps Society members should encourage local wine merchants to support and stock the classic heritage red and white wines produced on these family-owned South Australian vineyards where both traditional and modern winemaking techniques ensure a tasty fruit flavoured quality wine selection – whether it be in Riesling, Almond Grove Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, among others, from McLaren Vale (or the outstanding Shiraz for that matter). Leconfield and Richard Hamilton Wines have the quality and variety developed for every palate reflecting well on the 6 generations of the Richard Hamilton dynasty who created and developed this vineyard and winemaking operation over nearly two centuries of endeavour, innovation and modernisation.

Whether it was caused by the need to dodge the Revenue Officers or simply a need to be a pioneer settler and make wine as well, Dover's legacy to the Australian



Richard & Jette Hamilton Toast the Family Success

wine industry is the enduring name of Richard Hamilton!

I am deeply indebted and immensely grateful to Dr Richard Hamilton, Proprietor of Leconfield and Richard Hamilton Wines, and to Kate Mooney, the Marketing and Events Co-ordinator www.leconfieldwines.com, for their invaluable help with providing details of the history of the family and for their patience in answering questions raised in the research for this story. Also my sincere thanks to Martin Gordon, who has researched the Hamilton Wine history and who wrote the scripts for Richard Hamilton's two highly decorated

documentary films "WineLine 1" and "WineLine 2 Odyssey". I would also like to acknowledge information derived from the book "Colony" written by Reg Hamilton in respect of Old Dover and the Hamilton wine making industry as well as providing an interesting insight into the history of the democratic processes and institutions of South Australia. In fact a brief review of the book "Colony" has previously been given by the Newsletter's illustrious Editor in March 2011 issue number 70 page 27. Reg Hamilton is a sixth-generation descendant of Richard Hamilton and a grandson of Sydney Hamilton. He lives in Melbourne and is Deputy President at Fair Work Australia, being a judge of that court.

The Dover Millionaire

Derek Leach

In the 1970s a box containing 100 love letters from Helen to Frank was found in a Lloyds Bank safe, having been deposited some time during the First World War. The finder put them in his loft for 40 years before passing them on to an author living in Toddington.

The incredible story of Helen Nelson was pieced together from the love letters and some research. Her colourful life included running a pub in Toddington for 34 years. Before she was 21 she married Edward Randell, proprietor of the Dover Empire Palace of Varieties in Market Square. Helen's father was absent and she was given away by her brother; the best man was ill and was replaced by a local man. There were no relations of the groom present. Even stranger, the married couple did not attend the reception for 60 people, but left straight away from the church for

their honeymoon in Scarborough.

What do we know about the groom who was born Edward Randell Smith in 1878; Smith being the surname of his unmarried mother, Emily Jane, who married the father three years later despite her being 32 years younger. Father was a City businessman who left £12,699.11s.1d to his widow (worth about £1million today), who died three years later aged 43, leaving £1558.15s.2d to her son, Edward, then aged 16, when he became 21. Before he married Helen and less than six months after his 21st birthday in 1899, he and Mr. J. Engleman took over the management of Chevers Palace, Dover's music hall on a seven year lease and changed its name. Edward soon became known as 'Dover's Millionaire'.

Helen and Frank lived at 3 East Cliff, but

only five months after the wedding in January 1900 Edward disappeared. He had spent a fortune in 12 months and was deep in debt. Summoned for non-payment of rates he was thought to be in South Africa and was then declared bankrupt. His partner bought Edward's share in the Empire, which helped to pay off some of the debts. (Unfortunately, Engleman was also declared bankrupt in 1901, blaming it on Edward).

Abandoned Helen, two months pregnant, went back to the family pub in Toddington. Following the death of both her parents, she married again in 1905, describing herself as a widow, even though Edward could still be alive. Her husband was Bertie Armstrong. In 1907 they became joint licensees of the Sow and Pigs in Toddington.

Unfortunate in her choice of men, Bertie ran off to Canada in 1913, but Helen continued to run the pub. In the same year Helen met the love of her life: James Norbury Franklin-Smith, called Frank, who worked for an auctioneering firm. He soon moved into a room at the pub, but Bertie turned up in 1914 and joined up. Bertie apparently had women in Canada. Helen stays loyal to Frank who has also joined up and stays at the pub when on leave, but he



The Sow and Pigs Pub at Toddington

was posted to France in 1915 and did not return to England until after the war, hence several love letters a week.

Both men came home at the end of the war. On 21 November 1918 Helen applied for an uncontested divorce on grounds of desertion and adultery, which was granted and on 27 November 1919 she married Frank, now a Lieutenant Colonel. Her second bigamous marriage. Bertie went back to Canada. They sold the pub and bought an egg farm in Cornwall, but went bankrupt in 1922, running another pub thereafter. In 1949 Helen applied to have her first husband declared dead and intestate. As the lawful widow she received £591 from Edward's estate after all debts were paid; her current and past marital status were not questioned!

Frank died in 1953, aged 71, leaving £9.12s 6d and having spent 34 happy years with Helen. She retired when she was 74 and died in 1968 aged 82.

Source: *'Bigamy, Bankruptcy, War and Divorce - the tangled life of a Toddington landlady'* by Richard Hart and Paul Brown (History Press, 2019).



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The Shelling of Dover 1940 - 1944

Joe Harman

An Article from the Joe Harman Collection

I have a very vivid memory of when the shelling of Dover started on Monday 12th August 1940. We heard an explosion at about 10 o'clock. Looking up to Prospect Place close to the railway we could see smoke curling up. I went up with others to give assistance, but the only real casualty was a dog. Then there was another crack and we could see smoke rising from behind the gasworks wall near St. Radigund's Road railway bridge. It was very eerie and I began to look round for cover and the only trench was between the rows of potatoes on the allotments. I realised it was much nearer home and rushed back down Edgar Road. The emergency services were just arriving and I was told that two of our neighbours from Oswald Road had been killed. The area was cordoned off and pieces of hot metal retrieved; we started to speculate as no plane had been heard diving out of the sky.

I can well recall the shooting down of the barrage balloons and can still see the pilot of the Messerschmitt as he careered along Magdala Road at about 15 feet after destroying our own balloon at Cherry Tree Avenue. I beat a strategic retreat behind the brick pillar of our side gate.

My sister had been to visit our grandmother at New Romney and I was on the way down to meet her from the Hastings to Margate coastal bus. I was only about 50 yards from home when I heard a crack like a pistol shot and looked up to see chimney pots spinning around on the opposite side of the road. I ran back to check on my neighbours, but fortunately there was only blast damage as the shell had landed in soft ground. Recently, I have met Freddie Best who lived nearby and was in his back garden at the time; he

was as lucky as me, as we were only about 50 yards from the impact. I proceeded downtown by bus and heard more explosions. The coastal bus had been stopped at Maxton under the usual procedure and I managed to get up there to join my sister after passing the Alma public house, which had a narrow escape; I remember seeing pieces of shrapnel embedded in the road.

My mother had died at the end of September 1940 due to kidney failure, vowing she would not leave dear old Dover. I had to go down to Dr. Elliot's residence in Maison Dieu Road to collect the certificate, returned up Ladywell by the Fire Station and shortly afterwards a shell landed on the building doing considerable damage. It was with some trepidation when five days later we filed up behind the coffin in Charlton Cemetery, but luckily it was a quiet day!

My work place at the East Kent garage was in the firing line and the enemy proceeded to knock pieces off the Burlington Hotel. I can recall sitting on an orange box in the repair pit as the so-called "Large Lumps" landed and pieces of shrapnel skated across the concrete floor. The reporters often talked about the shells whistling, but the only whistle I heard was when a piece of shrapnel hurtled by from an explosion some 300 yards away.



WWII Shell Damage Snargate Street at Five Post Lane

Death of Thomas Longley

From the Dover Express Friday 26th February 1904

Submitted by Derek Leach

The death occurred on Monday at Dover at the age of 56 years of Mr T. Longley a member of a very old and much respected Dover family. His father was a butcher in Dover and he was born in Snargate Street.

For many years Mr Longley has been landlord of the Star Inn, Church Street, a quiet hostelry at the rear of St. Mary's Church. From his youth he developed great size of body, more especially in his chest measurement. As he grew older his size increased and in the course of time he came to be regarded as the heaviest man in the kingdom. His great bulk doubtless caused him discomfort and inconvenience nevertheless he until recent years enjoyed good health. Visitors to the inn mentioned the fact of his remarkable size to their friends and he became somewhat of a curiosity which could not have been pleasant to one who was naturally of a refined disposition. Of late years his portrait has appeared in several London papers and without much regard to his feelings, his weight, girth, and height were published and comparisons made between him and other heavy men known in recent history.

It is said that his notoriety caused him to receive offers to go on "show", but he shrank from anything of the kind. Now that death has claimed our townsman it becomes a matter of history to record that he was beyond question, previous to his illness, the heaviest man in the United Kingdom, his weight being 46 stone and his chest measurements 86 inches. Owing to his bulk



Thomas Longley

he did not look tall but he was 6 foot.

For thirteen years Mr Longley had been confined to his house. The last time he visited London he had to travel in the guard's van since it was found impossible to pass his bulk through the doorway of an ordinary carriage.

Heavy as he was Mr Longley was 62 stone below the weight of the bulkiest man to whom history has any record, Daniel Lambert. Some idea of the girth of the great celebrity, who was born in Leicester in 1770 and died in Stainford in 1809, may be gathered from the fact that his waistcoat, which is still preserved at the inn where he died, is sufficient to enclose seven ordinary persons. Twenty years earlier than Lambert there lived in Essex a grocer who at the age of 25 weighed over 43 stone but unlike Lambert he refused to become a showman's attraction and so little is known of him. There is a well known case of a girl of four years who weighed over 18 stone. In the popular mind Arthur Orten is no less noted for his impudent claim to the estates than for his corpulence. Contemporaries described him on his arrival in England from Australia as gross, ponderous and unwieldy compared with Lambert, however he shrinks into insignificance. His weight at the time of the first trial was given as slightly over 20 stone though he is said to have "put on flesh" subsequently at an alarming rate.

Apart from being so well known Mr Longley will be very much missed by the poor in the neighbourhood of his house. Whenever he

heard anyone in distress he was always conscious to assist.

The funeral took place yesterday at St. Mary's cemetery Copt Hill where the grave was dug close by the church. It was seven feet deep and was eight feet long by three feet three inches wide.

The service was impressively conducted by the Rev. Prebendary A. I. Palmes who came over from Saltwood to add his last tribute of respect in the memory of an esteemed former parishioner. The immense size of the deceased gave rise to rumour that it would be necessary to interfere with the structure of the Star Inn to get the coffin out but Messrs. Flashman & Co., who undertook the funeral, found no need to do this and the coffin was slid through a window of the bar on to the hearse, which was drawn up close to the window for that purpose. At the graveside the bearers numbered ten and additional help had to be given in carrying the remains up

the slope. The funeral was timed to leave the house at 2 p.m.

There was a dense crowd around the Star Inn when the procession started taking the route, Castle Street, Maison Dieu Road, Park Avenue, Salisbury Road, and Frith Road. The procession was followed by hundreds of people whilst thousands witnessed it en-route. At the graveside there was probably between two and three thousand people present and in all probability there was as much public attention given to the funeral as there was on the occasion of the late Sir Richard Dickeson; and in addition to the general public there were many who mourned the deceased as a very good friend.

There were many beautiful wreaths upon the coffin from his immediate relatives and friends whilst behind the procession was a carriage filled with wreaths and floral devices from his wider circle of friends, including Sir William Crundall.

COWGATE CEMETERY Deborah Gasking

Venture up into our wonderful, tranquil nature reserve.

Yes, that is what our oasis is: not just a place for our old bones. Rest awhile here and cast your vision 180°. What could you see? The Kent Downs - our place in the North Downs, an Area of Outstanding Beauty. Yes, you read correctly - it's official, we are privileged to be living in a beautiful area.

And nestled in and below this landscape of distinctive character and natural beauty of National interest are our familiars:

The Castle - our ancient weapon of threat.

Dover Harbour - a mixed bag of expansion and contraction and expansion over millennia.

Connaught Park - our gift from Victorian times.

That constant rolling expanse of water named after our town - the Strait of Dover (historically known as the Dover Narrows), our very own bit of the English Channel.

France - our enemy with whom we warred up to 31 times (number depends on how you count them...).

St Mary's church - Cowgate cemetery was created as St Mary's was full.

So, are you tempted? Come and see our paradise and take in all of the above, but also look around within the cemetery's walls - see how we care for nature here, take note of the names engraved on the stones and absorb our local (and international) history.

2020 Christmas Tree Competition

1st Prize

£50

7th Year

2 Prizes of

£25

Plus Consolation Prizes to be won

THE COMPETITION AREA WILL COVER

THE USUAL OLD CASTLE WARD

Plus FOLKESTONE RD AS FAR AS APPROACH RD INCLUDING CHURCH RD, MALMAINS RD, LASCELLES RD, CHURCHILL RD, ELMS VALE RD AS FAR AS EATON RD INCLUDING VALE VIEW RD, MONINS RD AND THE WESTERN HEIGHTS

JUDGING

TREES DISPLAYED IN WINDOWS WILL BE JUDGED FROM
16TH DECEMBER TO 6TH JANUARY EPIPHANY "12TH NIGHT"

2020 REPORT

I HAVE BEEN BUSY IN 2020 E.G. DELIVERING LEAFLETS FOR "TOGETHER IN DOVER" TO HELP PEOPLE IN LOCKDOWN, HAVING NUMEROUS NOISY SOUTHERN WATER MANHOLE COVERS REPAIRED, PROGRESSING THE DOVER HORSE TROUGH PROJECT, TO HAVE IT RETURNED TO ITS PROPER ORIGINAL HOME AT THE ELMS VALE JUNCTION. ASKED ROYAL MAIL TO REPLACE MISSING POST BOX IN GOSCHEN ROAD AND STAGECOACH TO RETURN 62/68 TO NORMAL SERVICE. I HAVE ALSO SUBMITTED OVER FIFTY F.O.I. REQUESTS TO VARIOUS KENT BODIES, MOSTLY D.D.C. TO ESTABLISH THE FACTS ON MANY SUBJECTS.
BUSY FOR MY WARD AND FOR DOVER.

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

DOVER NEEDS TO COMMEMORATE THE LONG LIFE OF THE LATE DAME VERA LYNN WHO WAS SO CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH OUR FAMOUS WHITE CLIFFS.

I HAVE PROPOSED TO THE LEADER OF DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL THAT THE SECTION OF THE SAXON SHORE WAY FROM ATHOL TERRACE UP THE CLIFF TO THE NATIONAL TRUST BUILDINGS BE CALLED “**VERA LYNN WAY**”.

THIS BEING THE PUBLIC FOOTPATH FROM THE TOWN TO THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER IT WOULD BE SEEN AS AN APPROPRIATE TRIBUTE TO A LADY WHO DID SO MUCH FOR BRITAIN. A SIMPLE PROPOSAL WITH LITTLE EXPENSE TO IMPLEMENT.

ALSO IN FOLKESTONE RECENTLY BOB MOULAND, WHO WAS BORN IN DOVER, DEMONSTRATED COURAGE AND WAS PUBLIC SPIRITED IN RESTORING A VICTORIAN FOUNTAIN.

THESE ARE MY TRIBUTES TO DAME VERA LYNN AND BOB MOULAND. THE COURAGE OF THESE TWO PEOPLE, IN DIFFERENT WAYS PAST AND PRESENT, ARE EXAMPLES OF THE BEST OF BRITISH.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL IN UNUSUAL TIMES!

Cllr GRAHAM WANSTALL

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

Planning Committee

Graham Margery

Acting Chairman Planning Committee

Our Chairman Pat Sherratt is taking a well-deserved break for a few months so this is my first report as I stand in for him for a while. I am most grateful to Pat as he has mentored me as his deputy over the last three years.

I'm delighted to report that we have two new members joining the committee, Tony Bones and Charles Lynch, both of whom bring considerable practical experience to planning matters and they have already been making an important contribution to our work.

A major part of that work is in the review of planning applications that affect the wards of Dover, River and Whitfield and these last few months have been as busy as ever. It would not be practical for us to comment or respond to every application but we take a particular interest in those affecting Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, are related to major building projects or are significant in some other way. Since the last Newsletter we have made formal response to Dover District Council in respect of 25 planning applications. You might expect that we only respond to register an objection as so often happens in other walks of life but we have a long standing practice to express support where possible. By taking this balanced approach and offering constructive criticism to enhance the proposal or protect the locality, the Dover Society has built a reputation in which it is much respected by both Town and District Councils.

The Planning Committee is always pleased to receive comments and feedback from

the members of the Society. Members can let the Planning Committee know their views on any application, or on any development that may concern them. This will help form the official Dover Society response. Alternatively they can lodge their views as an individual directly with the DDC Planning Dept. in writing or via the DDC Planning portal at <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Applications/Home.aspx>

Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs): This is a matter of great concern as the proliferation of such properties tends to depress the socio-economic profile of the town which in turn deters investment and keeps house prices depressed. Pat has reported in detail about this in previous Newsletters. Sadly, since the last Newsletter, a further three properties have been granted approval as HMOs providing accommodation for 25 occupants. This brings the total to 45 properties for 507 occupants. The situation in both Ramsgate and Margate is under much better control resulting in a shift to Dover where it is evidently much easier to get an HMO approved. We will continue to monitor the situation, objecting to further proliferation and striving for better controls at DDC.

Site of former Crypt restaurant: Since the tragic fire in 1977 and the subsequent demolition of the building in 1985 caused by neglect, the site has been an eyesore with a growth of vegetation and the accumulation of rubbish. We have pressed DDC to take Section 215 action against the owner but the council claim legal "complications" so this Grade II Listed site

has continued in a state of disgraceful dereliction. That this state of affairs should have continued for so long is beyond belief. The site is on a major thoroughfare for visitors moving from the Town Centre to the seafront and is an embarrassment to the town.

So, when DDC approached Dover Arts Development about a mural at the site by a local artist we were delighted to be able to participate in the consultation about the work. We were also encouraged that DDC were committing resources to the site. However, the proposed artwork, good as it is and certainly an improvement on the present situation, sadly does not go anywhere near far enough to bring the site to a satisfactory condition. Major redevelopment work is needed and the Dover Society will continue to urge DDC to take drastic action to improve. Congratulations to artist Mike Tedder on being appointed to create the mural but we continue to look to see even more investment from DDC to bring about further improvement.

Maison Dieu bus/cycle lane: Local residents were surprised by the sudden appearance of a bus/cycle lane on Maison Dieu Road running from the bottom of Frith Road to Castle Street. There was no public consultation about it which, if there had been, could have saved wasting public money. A number of people contacted KCC who said they would not be replying to any correspondence. According to their website the purpose of the scheme was to encourage children to cycle to school but since there are no schools along the particular route the scheme was clearly misguided. Furthermore, the barriers down the middle of the road were a hazard in themselves. Thankfully these barriers have now been removed and we understand the scheme is going to be

abandoned but the road markings remain giving rise to confusion as to whether the scheme is in operation or not. We wait and see.

Conservation Areas: The Conservation Area Character Appraisals that have been completed for Dour Street and the Town Centre are still with DDC for the approval and acceptance. Under the present circumstances we may have to wait a long time.

We continue to see planning applications to convert upper floors of properties in the town centre into residential apartments. We generally support such applications but have been concerned that the size of rooms are often smaller than the recommendations in national and local guidelines. Thankfully, the recent proposals have been much better.

Opposite the churchyard of St Mary's is 43 Biggin Street which has a bear on the wall over the shop front. It also had fine oriel windows which some time ago were removed and the openings boarded up. We objected to this and sought intervention by DDC to have them restored. We are delighted to see that the oriel windows have at last been replaced.

New Planning Regulations: There has been much reporting in the media about proposals to radically overhaul the planning regulations with the intention of simplifying the process, and allowing certain schemes to proceed without the need for planning permission and so speed up the delivery of much needed housing stock. It's interesting to that James Jamieson, Chair of the Local Government Associated quoted "The idea that planning was a barrier to house building was a myth. Nine in 10 planning applications are approved by councils, while more than a

million homes given planning permission in the last decade have not yet been built." We are only too well aware of delays in delivery here in Dover as seen at Buckland Mill, Westmount College, site next to allotments in Folkestone Road, Former Connaught barracks and of course a very low delivery of 5,000 houses in Whitfield. There is a public consultation in process which we are considering how best to

respond.

On a lighter note, the new Leisure Centre at Whitfield is applying for permission to extend their opening hours on Sunday. The reason apparently is to provide a private opportunity for naturist swimming. Apparently it's quite popular and has been missed since the closure of the old leisure centre.

Local Plan Project Advisory Group

Withdrawal of Business and Community Representatives

Patrick Sherratt

Chair Dover Society Planning Committee

As many will not be aware of what the Local Development Framework (LDF) or "Local Plan" is, I quote the definition as follows; "The Local Development Framework is a collection of planning documents that deliver the spatial planning strategy and policies for the local area".

The last LDF by Dover District Council being adopted in February 2010 with Land Allocations in January 2015. It is normal for a LDF to be adopted every ten years.

In 2014 DDC formed the Local Plan Project Advisory Group (PAG). The role of this was to comment at various stages of the LDF procedure with the objective of an adopted plan implemented no later than 2020. It should be noted the PAG is not a decision-making body and is only an advisory group. In addition to DDC Councillors there being three business and three community representatives. With no activity for PAG, by early 2017 I personally challenged why as the delivery date seemed unlikely compared with the timescale indicated in 2014. My main

concern being the socio-economic profile of Dover had declined with all six wards now being in the top 20% of deprived wards in England and needed urgent adopted policies if the situation was to improve.

When the policy was adopted in 2010 only two wards fell in this category and the DDC objective in the LDF was to "Have no areas falling within the 20% of those most deprived in England". This is sadly proof of the failure by DDC.

I have written in previous Society newsletter planning reports that a contributory factor of this decline is the failure to deliver within the 2006 'Conversion to Flats Guidelines' issued by DDC but not legally adopted by it. Also, the large increase of HMO properties as there is no control by DDC. In 2016 when I sought that the 2006 document be adopted, DDC stated it would not do so as it could be encompassed in the next LDF. I reminded Council that this amounted to four years of allowing sub-standard conversions, but again DDC would not move.

The above items, as well as social improvements, have been areas that I concentrated on at PAG meetings and felt hopeful these would be resolved by inclusion within the next LDF.

Despite the timescale, sparse activity until 2018, when a Stakeholders Workshop held on the 17th July 2018, was attended by Town/Parish Councils and many community/voluntary sector representatives. This was organised to enable DDC to deliver their vision and objectives for the period to 2037 that would embellish much in the next Local Plan. Feedback from attendees being made by a workshop method. At this function DDC gave a timescale as under:

Draft Local Plan to be published in
July/August 2019
Publication version to be published in
Feb/March 2020
Submit Local Plan to the Planning
Inspectorate, by August 2020
Examination November 2020
Adopted Local Plan 2021

The timescale is considerably behind the original objective due to little activity between 2014 and 2018. In January 2020 on the DDC website a revised timescale was posted that envisaged adoption of the plan by April 2022. No doubt DDC will blame this delay on Covid19 although the timescale was announced several weeks before Covid19 restrictions!

The PAG met to give input to aspects of the plan twice in 2018 and five times in 2019. With the arrival of Covid19 the last PAG meeting was held on the 5th March 2020.

It was with surprise that on the 28th September business and community

representatives learned from the DDC Democratic Services Manager that they had been removed as members of the PAG, with no reason why. This now results in no input by business or community as the PAG will only consist of DDC Officers and nominated DDC Councillors.

This is without doubt a lack of transparency and challenges democracy within DDC.

I responded to the Democratic Services Manager as well as the CEO of DDC. Only "Auto"-acknowledged by Democratic Services Manager with no acknowledgement from the CEO.

I have raised this matter with the Chair of Deal Society who is also a community representative of PAG. The Deal Society have referred the matter to Civic Voice as the Deal Society considers the action by DDC is "an assault on local democracy". Dover Society is no longer a member of Civic Voice and as such cannot receive support from it.

The decision to withdraw business and community members was made by the DDC Cabinet and personally proposed by its Chairman (Cllr Bartlett) as Leader of Council. It should be noted that the Cabinet consists of seven DDC Councillors. None represents a Dover Town ward. The Leader represents Little Stour & Ashstone, with two members for Walmer, and one each for Sandwich, Eastry, Whitfield and Guston/Kingsdown/St Margaret's.

The above clearly demonstrates that democracy is at stake for Dover if this practice is permitted at DDC and I feel our membership should be made aware.

When The Plague Hit Dover

Terry Sutton

With the coronavirus in East Kent, memories were revived about the time when the Great Plague killed off hundreds in Dover and thousands elsewhere.

It was in the 14th century, around 1348, when the Black Death killed off an estimated 30-45% of the population. Experts still do not agree what caused the Black Death but the most accepted opinion is that it came from the fleas that thrived on the back of rats.

The dreaded disease swept England, Scotland and Wales in three waves. Historians believe it arrived, via a sailor from a ship that had arrived from Gascony, at Melcombe Regis, part of present-day Weymouth, Dorset in June 1348 and lasted two years. The second outbreak came in 1361-1365 with a third wave in 1368-1369.

It was back again in the mid-seventeenth century, when Dover was so badly affected that mass graves for the victims were provided on the lower slopes of the Western Heights, roughly where P&O Ferries' headquarters are now situated. It is reported that more than 500 Dovorians and visitors were buried there.

Some blamed foreigners arriving at Dover and at other Kent ports but others blamed English men and women who had fled from London to Dover in the hope of escaping from the slaughter.

Many towns in the country refused entry to those fleeing from the cities but Dover, being such an important port, could not do that. A group of Dover's leading citizens were

demanding a certificate to show that those arriving in Dover were free from the disease.

In Dover, as in the rest of the country, the homes of families infected were bolted and windows sealed in a bid to prevent the disease spreading. A large red cross was painted on front doors to give a warning.

Dover Town Council ordered the burning of bonfires in the town in the hope the smoke would wipe out the dreaded infection while dogs and cats were rounded up and killed.

Having originated in China and Inner Asia, the Black Death decimated the army of the Kipchak khan Janibeg while he was besieging the Genoese port of Kaffa (now Feodosiya) in Crimea (1347). With his forces disintegrating, Janibeg catapulted plague-infested corpses into the town in an effort to infect his enemies. From Kaffa, Genoese ships carried the epidemic to Mediterranean ports. It spread inland, to Sicily (1347); North Africa, Italy, Spain, and France (1348); and Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Germany, and the Low Countries (1349). Editor



The Black Death in 14th Century

Together4Dover – A Crisis Not Wasted

Peter Sherred

It is perhaps hard to envisage a positive side to the Coronavirus Pandemic with all its implications for the ways we have had to live our lives in the context of rising death tolls across the world, the air of negativity that seemed to infect every news channel, together with the bad aspects of human behaviour witnessed by panic buying and hoarding, without regard to the needs of others, at the beginning of the lockdown. Yet there have been several positives during the crisis. Among them the desire to volunteer remained strong witnessed by the wealth of community groups and bands of volunteers which sprang up to support the vulnerable, key workers and the NHS. Much focus has been placed on Captain Sir Tom Moore, the centenarian who lifted the spirits of the country during the crisis with his positivism and optimism, as he raised a staggering amount for the NHS after setting out to raise a modest £1000 for NHS Charities Together. But his quiet selfless gesture has been replicated many times over by ordinary people proverbially rolling up their sleeves to help others. People seemed to respond to the quote, attributed to Winston Churchill “a crisis is a terrible thing to waste”! Many did not let the crisis go to waste for, as Coronavirus pressed the pause button on our lives and global society, some ? million people emerged to support the NHS in a voluntary way and the volunteering spirit was more than evident in Dover.

At the start of the Covid19 emergency, a diverse group of 19 people representing Dover organisations came together at The Beacon Church Hall on March 19th to co-ordinate action in helping the vulnerable during the period of lockdown and out of such meeting came Together4Dover (T4D) under the umbrella of Dover Big Local. One of those who attended the meeting was a

local resident, Amanda Halstead, who had set up a Facebook page for volunteers to help people in Dover and she had recruited almost 1000 expressions of help.

Following the meeting a core team of eight people, including Amanda, worked hard to create an organisation to mobilise the many volunteers who offered to help support the most vulnerable people in Dover with deliveries and pickups. The organisational tasks included the putting together of Health and Safety and Safeguarding protocols, the acquisition of a VoIP phone number (a VoIP phone is a hardware or software-based telephone designed to use voice-over IP technology to send and receive phone calls over an IP network. An IP network is a communication network that uses Internet Protocol (IP) to send and receive messages between one or more computers), to connect requests to a single number to multiple volunteers, the creation of a website and a T4D Facebook page, the setting up of area responder teams, the preparation of ID cards for all Errand Volunteers, the acquisition of hand sanitizer and shopping bags and much more.

All volunteers were required to provide a character reference before undertaking any errands. Additionally, each Errand Volunteer was supplied with a pack including a personalised ID card (to be shown to a resident), high-viz vest, face masks and sanitiser gel. Both Errand and Helpline Volunteers were given guidelines of how each service worked and regular feedback was sought from volunteers to help with improving services. The core team worked closely with Dover District Council officers to ensure there was connectivity between T4D and Council systems so service users could be referred to

the appropriate level of support for their individual needs.

The T4D Helpline went live from 9am on Friday 3rd April and ran until it was suspended on August 1st (when shielding for most people ceased), during which time support for people (who resided in Alkham, in the areas of Dover at Aycliffe, Buckland, Clarendon, Elms Vale, Folkestone Road, The Linces, London Road, Maxton, Melbourne Avenue, St Radigunds, Tower Hamlets, as well as Capel, Elvington, Eythorne, Guston, Hougham, Kearsney, Lydden, River, Temple Ewell and Whitfield) who did not have family or neighbours to help them, was provided initially for shopping or collection of prescriptions. It was expected requests for help would be met within 24 hours. As weeks passed T4D evolved its systems to address the demands upon it and detailed flow charts were updated for both Errand and Helpline Volunteers while the scope of the operation expanded to include the provision of laundry facilities, free food delivery, hot meals and specialist counselling for people exhibiting mental health issues. More than 80 Dover residents volunteered either to man the helpline, run shopping and prescription errands or delivering hot meals and fresh food. Support also came from local companies with Dover Marina Hotel cooking the hot meals, Buckland Media supplying all the printing for the fliers circulated by T4D volunteers,



Dover Marina Hotel Staff - Food Parcels for T4D

Drop N Go offering laundry services, the Saga Group providing driver volunteers plus staff to help with website production while the phone system was kindly donated by the Dial9 group. Surplus food was donated by local supermarkets including Aldi, Morrisons, Tesco and Marks & Spencer. Tesco donated 1,500 carrier bags and Aldi donated hand sanitiser for volunteers.

16 representatives of those who had attended the March meeting came together in a Zoom meeting on June 23rd to review progress when Lynn Harris, T4D volunteer administrator, was able to report T4D had received by then 937 helpline calls with 490 errands undertaken. Of 63 active volunteers over half ran errands. 671 hot meals had been delivered to local people, 39 families were receiving Fareshare food support and 5 people had received laundry support. A new website was in place and two active Facebook groups existed. Three batches of fliers had been printed and distributed to residents over the area of operation. A grant had been received from Dover District Council, which had enhanced services, while Dover Big Local gave additional funding for administration costs.

When lockdown restrictions eased T4D core team decided that, with effect from Monday 13th July, the time to complete errands should be extended to 48 hours mainly because fewer volunteers were available to undertake errands. When the operation was suspended on August 1st particular care was taken to ensure that regular callers could be supported beyond July 31st by signposting to another service where possible. At the time of suspension the core team offered grateful thanks to all organisations and volunteers who rose to meet the challenge of extraordinary times. T4D reported it had been overwhelmed by the support of volunteers with many going above and beyond the call of duty in completing

errands. People showed just how deeply they cared about Dover's community. T4D had worked closely with Dover District Council's Community Development Team, Community Wardens, and the local NHS Social Prescriber all of which proved invaluable in creating successful connectivity across the parties.

Taking into account the short lead in times involved to set up the operation T4D's success is measured by the fact volunteers completed around 600 errands, over 1,300 phone calls were received while nearly 800 hot meals had been delivered plus over 800 food deliveries all of which was for the benefit of those who had no family or friends to undertake tasks on their behalf.

While now suspended, it must be acknowledged the T4D initiative was a resounding success with firm foundations laid to reinstate a service should it prove necessary. Certainly, it is in Dover's interests, especially the interests of the vulnerable, to maintain the cohesion and momentum gained by T4D. It provided such a positive response to the pandemic that the experience gained will be vital should a second wave of the virus strike. It will also enable the organisation to respond to any other similar crisis. T4D built an excellent precedent of organisations working collaboratively together in the interests of the common good. All involved share a willingness to maintain the ethos and structure created which should be applauded. T4D was nominated, along with other charities, for its outstanding contribution to the local community during lockdown and was chosen as the winner by the Chair of Kent County Council. At the time of writing a ceremony is being planned where the Chair of Kent County Council, The High Sheriff and The Lord Lieutenant of Kent will meet with representatives of T4D.

This was a collective response that certainly did not let a crisis go to waste! Well done everyone involved in this wonderful example of the spirit of volunteer activism in Dover and congratulations on the well-deserved official recognition of the operation's success.

Having been singled out as an outstanding achievement to the community a Thank You Presentation was held on Monday 28th September, virtually through Microsoft Teams, when Together4Dover received warm words of appreciation from the Lord Lieutenant of Kent (the Lady Colgrain), the High Sheriff of Kent (Mrs Remony Millwater), the Chairman of Kent County Council (Councillor Graham Gibbens), the Chairman of Dover District Council (Councillor Michael Connolly), the Town Mayor of Dover (Councillor Gordon Cowan) and District Councillor Nigel Collor (the appropriate Portfolio Holder from Dover District Council).

Some of the volunteers from T4D gave a description of their experiences during the 2020 unprecedented period of lockdown and all the dignitaries praised the voluntary efforts made by all who had created the organisation and especially the volunteers who worked so hard to deliver food or collect prescriptions or undertook other tasks. Dover's Town Mayor, in a heartfelt address, said it was the "greatest honour" to pay a tribute in the presentation that recognised the love and community spirit created by T4D. He indicated they provided a lifeline for the most vulnerable citizens of Dover and praised the selflessness of all involved in the "amazing story" that demonstrated the community values of Dover. He further observed that all the volunteers gave their own time freely and were not paid, not because they had no value but because, as volunteers, "they are priceless". What better tribute than that can be given?

Editor

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Dover Foodbank Meets Challenge of 2020 Coronavirus Emergency

—Peter W Sherred—

The vision for the Dover Outreach Centre was the subject of an article in issue 96 of the Society's Newsletter dated November 2019 at page 41. The initiative for the Centre came from Christians Together in Dover (CTID) and was first mentioned in 2010, along with several other outward facing Christian initiatives. CTID set up a forward-looking group to consider avenues of Christian service in the community beyond the walls of church buildings and produced a bullet-point list of projects which included the provision of a foodbank, an Outreach Centre, a winter night shelter and a money course.

Focus was placed initially on the establishment of a foodbank, to be in operation before larger projects were embarked upon. The foodbank was opened in October 2013, utilising a store at Whitfield and another at a redundant building provided by Dover Harbour Board in the Eastern Docks. It has operated successfully since it started, but was confronted by arguably its biggest challenge in 2020 following the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on so many individuals and families. Current head and project co-ordinator is Jonathan Wheeler, who is aided by his wife, Janet, and a small Management Team of half a dozen people.



Jonathan and Janet Wheeler at Whitfield Warehouse

Jonathan, a former teacher in Folkestone for 35 years, was born in Temple Ewell and lives in Dover. He succeeded Noel Beamish as lead person after three years of operation, as Noel focused his efforts on the Outreach Centre.

The Dover Foodbank opened on 1st October 2013 with the initial 3 tonnes of donated food it felt it needed to operate in stock. Overwhelming support came from every area of the local community, enabling it to commence helping those in Dover who experience food poverty. Sadly, many people in Dover were struggling to feed their families and themselves. To meet this need the foodbank aimed to provide three days of emergency food as a bridge to cover the period before other support programmes could be accessed. Foodbank support required a voucher, issued by several local agencies, as proof of entitlement. Voucher claimants were advised of the opening hours of the distribution centres, the originals of which were at 'Footprints', The Beacon Church in London Road, and the Old Park Community Centre in Gordon Road. An additional distribution centre was established at The Ark (now One Church) in Tower Hamlets. Those with a foodbank voucher collected food help from the distribution centres.

Mindful of the stress imposed on people who had to admit they needed help with basic necessities, had to ask for a voucher in the first instance and then had to attend at the distribution centre to claim their entitlement, from the outset volunteers operating the foodbank gave voucher holders a warm reception, offering a hot drink and a biscuit. Once a voucher was

handed over, a trained volunteer put together enough food for three days for each person listed on the voucher while another trained volunteer helped the claimant(s) identify other agencies for support. To maintain self-respect, groceries were given to the claimant(s) in normal shopping bags so they could leave with dignity, carrying provisions sufficient to provide a balanced diet for three days.

The Dover Foodbank is one of many that operate across the country supported by the Trussell Trust. From this Trust a network of foodbanks sprung, all of which provide emergency food to people in crisis with additional support to help tackle the root causes that drive people into poverty. The Trust brings together the experiences of foodbanks in its network and their communities, to challenge the structural economic issues that lock people in poverty. The Trust's laudable aim is the raising of awareness of the existence of food poverty, coupled with a campaign for change to end UK hunger and poverty and thus the need for foodbanks in the UK. This is a huge challenge because in 2019 foodbanks supplied 1,808,949 emergency food supplies in the UK, representing a 20% increase on the previous year.

At the end of its first year of operation not only had the Dover Foodbank been visited by the Archbishop of Canterbury but it had collected and sorted around 25 tonnes of food, given three days of emergency food to nearly 1,800 local people, distributed a total of 17 tonnes to those in need and had received £8,000 worth of financial donations. The foodbank had spent some £6,000 on running expenses and had been supported by some 70 volunteers who provided 5,000 hours to collect, sort and distribute the donated food. By the second anniversary of opening the foodbank had provided food help to just under 3,500

people. The vision of Dover Foodbank, to enable all people in Dover to have the opportunity to live life to the full with hope for the future has, as a key ingredient, the provision of food in a crisis situation to facilitate the realisation of the vision. By March 2016, some 4475 people had received food aid since the inception of the bank, with 200 people being fed in that month alone. The figure of those being aided passed the 5000 mark later that year and in 2017 the foodbank reported that a total of 8,551 people had been helped. The figure topped 10,000 by the autumn of 2018. Over 3,000 people received help in the 12 months up to July 2018, a 54% increase on the previous year. By March 2019, the number of people assisted with three days of emergency food supplies had exceeded 12,000.

The pandemic of 2020 had a profound impact on the foodbank. It experienced its busiest six months ever, with a 57% increase in demand. The chart shows the number of people fed via the Dover Foodbank since October 2013, with the April 2020 spike graphically showing the impact of the pandemic crisis.



Foodbank Chart

Such a leap in demand was unprecedented, with the financial impact of the lockdown on families being a chief element as many people were furloughed and some made redundant. Additionally, many vulnerable

people were required to self-isolate for many months. Inevitably, with the restrictions imposed on the country to limit the spread of the virus, the foodbank had dramatically to change the way it operated. Due to self-isolating measures and other aspects of the impact of the virus, many volunteers upon whom the foodbank is dependent were unable to help.

Jonathan Wheeler explained that the method of operation in place since the start of the foodbank had to end. Instead, it operated entirely on a delivery basis, so when people seeking food aid contacted one of the local agencies an email was generated by the agency concerned direct to the foodbank. Once the email had been received, a volunteer from the foodbank telephoned the person seeking help and arranged for delivery of a food and provisions supply direct to the person's home on the next Tuesday, Thursday or Friday morning. The delivery is sometimes in the foodbank's own van, but more often than not, in volunteers' own vehicles, none of which have any foodbank markings on them so the delivery is anonymous. This very much accords with the original reception process where claimants were provided sensitively with normal shopping bags for provisions to avoid any sense of stigmatisation and to maintain human dignity. This was a seismic change in operation of the service because the initial reception procedures were no longer possible.

People who had never availed themselves of the use of the foodbank before now presented themselves because the effects of the lockdown had seriously impacted on all walks of life. The fact the demand increased so dramatically meant the foodbank has prepared itself for some challenging times ahead, planning for a difficult six months at least. The uncertainty caused by the possibility of a second wave of the virus

adds to the challenge for the immediate future, while announcements by P & O Ferries and DFDS regarding local redundancies could mean that there will be more calls on the foodbank resources.

The success of the Dover Foodbank is dependent upon several factors. Fundamentally, the willingness of people to act as volunteers to support the operation by donating their time to all aspects of the operation, including the warehouse, distribution centres, supermarket collections, the communications team and more, is crucial to the success of the operation.



JW with some Volunteers at Whitfield foodbank

The oldest of the volunteers was nonagenarian Revd Dr Michael Hinton, former Headmaster of Dover Grammar School for Boys and former priest of Shepherdswell, who volunteered from the opening of the foodbank until he moved away in recent years to a clergy retirement home.

The generosity of people to donate financially to assist the operation is another important element of support. Over the years there have been numerous examples of local initiatives by individuals, communities and organisations raising funds for the foodbank.

The support of supermarkets and other outlets in supplying quantities of food and other items removed from sale provides the foodbank with a considerable amount of stock. All such donations are thoroughly checked by volunteers and, with almost military precision, are sorted by date. This is labour-intensive work because all items delivered in crates are handpicked and examined, then are allocated to shelving which is itself dated. By this means all food deliveries to claimants are in good order. The system of shelving reflects the courses of meals, so all items of food normally forming part of a main course are placed on one set of shelving, while all ingredients for desserts are together on another set, and other provisions including dry items such as pasta, flour and toilet rolls are grouped on yet more shelves. Cereal packets are stored above the top level of the shelving.



Shelving Stocked with Supplies at Whitfield

Whilst the activity of the foodbank is directed at individuals and families, there is limited help offered, on an ad hoc basis, to the Outreach Centre in Snargate Street. Nothing, or extraordinarily little, is wasted in any form.

The generosity of the public in donating food and other goods to the foodbank at collection points, including local supermarkets aided by Supermarket Collection Days, all help supply the provisions the foodbank requires to assist

people in need. Schools across the town have helped the foodbank in several ways by collecting food and donating it to the bank.

Thanksgiving Services for the existence and work of the foodbank are held annually. The first of these took place in April 2015 at St Peter & St Paul Church, River, where the Revd Andy Bawtree, former Chairman of CTID, officiated and in April 2016, Dover Baptist Church hosted the second Thanksgiving Service. On Sunday 1st October 2017, the third Thanksgiving Service was held at The Beacon Church, while St Paul's RC Church in Maison Dieu Road hosted the Service in 2018. The Thanksgiving Service in 2019 took place at The Ark (One Church) in Tower Hamlets. The different venues underline the fact Dover Foodbank is run in partnership with local churches led by CTID. No one denomination claims the foodbank for its own.

In an ideal world there should be no need for foodbanks. However while there continues to be people in need in Dover, the town is fortunate the foodbank exists and will continue to support them by providing food, thanks entirely to the superb support of all its volunteers, fundraisers and donors, guided by the leadership of Jonathan Wheeler together with the other members of the Management Team. The establishment and operation of the foodbank is a remarkable feature of Dover's life in which all its inhabitants should take great pride. Jonathan Wheeler has a realistic approach to the operation and is preparing for more challenges rather than fewer in the immediate and foreseeable future. He views the foodbank as the bridge which connects those who have and give, to those who have not and receive. Should anyone wish to help Dover Foodbank it can be contacted by email at info@dovertfoodbank.org.uk or by phone on 07870 361180.

Thomas Becket, Pilgrimage and Dover Town Hall

Derek Leach

850 years ago this year on 29 December 1170 Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered in his own cathedral. Born in London in 1118, he was educated from 10 onwards at Merton Priory and then in Paris. His Norman father, Gilbert Becket, used his contacts to find a place for Thomas with Archbishop Theobald whom he impressed and was sent abroad to study law. In France he met the dying King Stephen who appointed Thomas as chancellor to his heir, Henry II.

Thomas and Henry, 15 years younger, became great friends despite their different characters. Thomas was calm, handsome and intelligent, whilst Henry was restless and lecherous with a nasty temper who bore grudges against anybody who displeased him. Henry, nevertheless, recognized Thomas's qualities and Thomas was devoted to the young, lively king.

On his deathbed Archbishop Theobald named Thomas as his successor, which Henry supported, but it would highlight the differences between them and the objectives of Church and State. These grew worse and Henry even believed that loyal Thomas was plotting against him, requiring Thomas to answer various charges. Becket fled to France for six years. Henry seized Canterbury's revenues and detained all Becket's relatives and colleagues. Becket made several attempts to resolve the situation, but it took the Pope to bring them together. Becket was restored to Canterbury and his possessions.

Despite this, Becket prophesied that Canterbury would soon have another martyr as some of the barons continued verbal attacks and made Henry angry with Thomas. The story is well known that four

of these knights assumed that they had orders from Henry to murder Becket. He met them in the cathedral, but refused to cancel the excommunication of bishops that had opposed him or to apologise to Henry. All four then savagely attacked him, leaving his body where it fell. On hearing the news Henry is said to have cried for three days. Within a few days three miracle cures were claimed after praying to the martyr. The Becket cult began.

Crowds started visiting the tomb in the crypt of the cathedral and in 1172 Becket was canonised as St. Thomas. Pilgrims would be greeted by a monk, offered food and drink, guided to where Becket was killed, then up the steps on their knees to the high altar where his body had rested for one night and finally to the crypt and the marble tomb. Following a fire in 1174 a new purpose-built chapel housed the tomb behind the high altar. In 1220 Thomas's bones were removed from the crypt, witnessed by Henry II, Archbishop Stephen Langton and many bishops, and placed in a gold-plated chest upon a pink marble pedestal with a tomb canopy. The shrine was adorned with many expensive gifts.



Murder of Thomas Becket

Apparently 26 wagons were needed to take away these treasures when Henry VIII destroyed the shrine in 1538. Monks guarded the shrine day and night with its perpetual burning candles. Mass was celebrated daily at the shrine's altar.

Pilgrims were travelling to the Holy Land as early as the 3rd century and played an important role in Christian life throughout the Middle Ages, leading to increases in travel and trade. Originally it was a pious act of faith with the reward of a place in heaven. Visiting the shrine of a saint would reduce guilt for committed sins – not just the shrine but the journey too. Enduring the hardships and dangers were likened to the suffering of Jesus.

Monasteries and monastic houses accommodated weary pilgrims; assisting the pilgrim was seen as sharing in the virtue of their journey, honouring Christ in every stranger. This included medical attention with many having infirmaries. Evesham Abbey even washed their feet – required by the Church, but rarely observed. The popularity of shrines was reinforced by the belief in the powers of remains of saints and holy images. This led to some corrupt use of fake items to fool pilgrims.

With increasing numbers of pilgrims many hospices (from *hospes* = guests) were founded to shelter pilgrims, including Dover's *Maison Dieu* in 1203, catering primarily for those arriving from and going to the continent on pilgrimage. In most hospices guests would sleep on straw-covered floors; how often the straw was changed is debatable, although some medieval wills do mention mattresses,



Thomas Becket Window

sheets and pillows being left to hospices.

Later, pilgrims also used inns, which varied in quality and in what was provided other than a bed. Chaucer's fictional pilgrims set off from the Tabard Inn at Southwark en route to Canterbury. Men and women would often be in separate quarters even if married and you would expect to share a bed with at least one other person. The Great Bed of Ware,

10 feet square, could sleep 20!

Some saw pilgrimage as an excursion, to meet new people, new cultures, new places, even to indulge in vice; Chaucer, writing 1380-1400 describes it as enjoying fellowship with others. There was a 'pilgrimage industry' involving inn keepers, souvenir sellers, hostel and ship owners; the Church also benefited financially from pilgrims' gifts.

In the 15th century the Church's teaching was questioned, leading to the rejection of relics, images, indulgences and pilgrimage; the Becket cult declined, culminating in the destruction of his shrine in 1538 during Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. With pilgrimage banned at least 563 monasteries and other religious institutions, in England, broke the pilgrimage tradition.

Today, many people, not only Christians but of other faiths or none, still go on pilgrimage and not only to shrines of saints for an uplifting and inspiring experience. Many visit Shakespeare's birthplace, Hitler visited Napoleon Bonaparte's tomb, not to mention those visiting Graceland to revere Elvis.

Source: *To Be A Pilgrim* by Sarah Hopper, Sutton Publishing 2002.



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PROGRAMME 2020

Non-members are welcome at all meetings except that only members may vote at the Annual General Meeting. You may join, pay on the night and vote at the meeting.

2020 - Winter Indoor Meetings

At the present we do not know when we will be able to hold our next indoor meeting. As soon as we know we will email all members that we can and post it on the Dover Society website. Any member who has not got an email address then please call any member of the committee after the new year when we may have an update.

Monday 19 October 7.30 **Meeting Cancelled**
Monday 16 November 7.30 **Meeting Cancelled**
Sunday 6 December **Society Christmas Lunch Cancelled**

2021 - We apologise but at present we are unable to make any firm arrangements for any of our winter programme of activities

January **Unclear if we can hold this meeting**
February **Dover Society "Wine and Wisdom" Quiz Night: At present we are unable to confirm that this event will take place**
March **Unclear if we can hold this meeting**
 Members will be notified if there is any change

Dover Society Summer Trips 2021 - Rodney Stone

Iain Robertson, our organiser from Leo's Pride, is hoping to be able to run three trips similar to those for 2020 that had to be cancelled because of the effects of COVID-19. I am grateful for the understanding of members when I had to return monies paid or destroy their cheques. The pandemic continues to throw uncertainties over all leisure plans for 2021. One is how many passengers will be allowed on coaches, currently 25 but it may stretch to 38 one day. Here are the trips as things stand:

*Weekday trip, possibly in April, to Denbies Winery in Dorking and canal cruise with cream tea. Denbies are so far declining to take any bookings and we must wait and see.

*Saturday trip to Brighton, or another location if members prefer, possibly in June. It could be arranged at shortest notice.

*4 day trip to Exmouth and the delights of Devon, Current likely dates 4th to 8th October. Any Society members who are interested in any of the trips please contact me on tel. 01304 852838 or email. randdstone29@gmail.com. I will then keep them in touch with developments.

For the Silver Phoenix Travel Club, Iain is seeking to run the following:

*Silverstone Tour 21 November 2020 - £49
*Dutch Bulb Fields Cruise. 23 to 27 April 2021 - £679. Heavily booked.
*Isle of Man 30 June to 5 July 2021 - £645
*London Show Dial M for Murder - 20 February, £64 non-members.

The Society will not be involved in the arrangements for these

Please contact Iain direct if you are interested. Tel: 07842 124094 email: tourop2002@yahoo.co.uk

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